

**United States
Information
Agency**

Washington, D.C. 20547

Executive Registry	
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December 21, 1984

Dear Bill:

The U.S. Information Agency's new global satellite network WORLDNET was featured in the current issue of TV Guide and I am pleased to send you a copy. Pg 40

Since its inception last fall, WORLDNET has enabled the United States government to project its foreign policy message more rapidly and accurately overseas to every region and continent of the world. This year cabinet and senior administration officials took part in discussions involving African participation in the Summer Olympics, conflicts in Central America, INF deployment and strategic arms talks, international trade and the world debt crisis.

In nearly every case, these broadcasts were heard or read by foreign audiences numbering in the millions.

In vital ways, WORLDNET has become a modern tool of diplomacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Charles Z. Wick".
Charles Z. Wick
Director

The Honorable
William J. Casey
Director
Central Intelligence Agency

L316 A circular stamp with the text "DCI EXEC REG" inside.

This Is One Show That's 'Driving the Russians Crazy'

The U.S. is using an innovative satellite hookup to deliver its foreign-policy message overseas

By Rod Townley

This is one heck of a conference call," enthused President Reagan to West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. It was Dec. 5, 1983, and Reagan was in the Oval Office. Kohl was in Athens. The two leaders chatted live by two-way video and occasionally tossed questions to three orbiting Spacelab astronauts (one of them a German) who were whizzing by 148 miles above the earth. Then foreign journalists in eight European cities got on the horn and asked the spacemen questions of their own.

There were no policy-changing pronouncements and not much sparkling repartee; but no matter. The medium was the message that day. With five satellites and a dozen earth stations involved, the event was possibly the most complex television stunt ever performed.

It was also a pretty good publicity stunt. In Germany alone, some 20 million people watched this demonstration of American wizardry and willingness to cooperate in the peaceful exploration of space. Total viewership may have reached 58 million.

It was all part of a U.S.-sponsored

global hookup called Worldnet, designed to put America's best foot forward in the arena of world opinion.

The service is the brainchild of Charles Z. Wick, the colorful director of the United States Information Agency. Wick was in Europe in October 1983 when word came of America's invasion of Grenada. "I was shocked," he says, "that Margaret Thatcher, whom I respect and admire, [felt] that it was an improper exercise. . . . I realized there was an enormous misunderstanding."

He came home and instructed Alvin Snyder, the USIA's director of Television and Film Service, to put together an international satellite network right away. Only a week later (Nov. 3), the Worldnet experiment was launched. United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick in New York, two State Department officials in Washington and two East Caribbean prime ministers in Barbados responded live (via two-way audio, one-way video) to journalists gathered in U.S. embassies in five European cities.

The exchanges were spirited. At one point, a German reporter asked if the American invasion of Grenada was like the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Ambassador Kirkpatrick shot back: "That's a really outrageous question!" And she proceeded to lay out the difference between force used to liberate and force used to subjugate.

European coverage of this Worldnet debut exceeded all expectations. Usually, says Wick, USIA efforts to explain American policies get "relegated to page 29" in the foreign press. But this was front-page stuff. And there was "absolutely unprecedented" TV coverage as well. In England, Independent Television's Channel 4 aired a lengthy report on the Worldnet press conference.

Anxious not to lose momentum, Wick arranged other far-flung media events and di-

L-r: Ronald Reagan, Helmut Kohl.